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THE NATIONAL ERA.

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 16, 1850.

For the National Era.

MY BROTHER.

BY MISS ALICE CAREY.

They said he was dying—I knew it was so,
For his blue eyes looked not into mine,
And calling the angels to hide me from wo,
With the light of the kingdom divine;
I covered him softly away from the chill
That was dimming his beauty—vain strife;
Already I felt that the shadow of ill
Was crossing his pathway of life.

Cold, cold in the churchyard, I cried, is the light,
As the moon up the steep azure rounds,
And the snow that has fallen so ghastly and white
Lies level along the still mounds.
Then folding his pale hands away from my own,
They said, God his life will renew,
As the seed in the dry furrow, sorrowfully sown,
Sprouts up in early spring dew.

POEMS BY GRACE GREENWOOD.

We had intended to notice the new volume of *Poems* by Grace Greenwood, just issued from the press of Ticknor, Reed, & Fields, Boston; but a critical correspondent has favored us with a review of it, which is so much better than anything we could write, that we gladly give it place. We have observed in the New York Tribune [illegible] leading journals many valuable and cordial critiques on the work, but none that excels the one we now lay before our readers.—*Ed. Era.*

GREENWOOD LEAVES.*

A year ago, the lady known to readers of the popular magazines and literary weeklies as Grace Greenwood, gave the public a selection from her earlier prose writings. This book, "Greenwood Leaves," has been too often and too favorably noticed to require further review; and we introduce it here only to indicate one source of the materials from which we estimate its author's literary capacity. Everybody will be glad to hear that a second volume is now before us, consisting of selections from her Poems. And before speaking of its contents we must praise the elegant appearance of the book—a characteristic in which Messrs. Ticknor, Reed, & Fields, are outdone by no publishing house in the country. The friends of the authoress will also be pleased to see her portrait, engraved from an excellent painting by Mr. C. G. Thompson.

The Poems in this volume have, we believe, without exception, appeared before, and been widely and admiringly read. Their republication, therefore, seems more a response to a call from the author's friends than a fresh adventure for literary reputation. This fact might almost seem to remove them beyond the pale of criticism, even did not the writer's evident care in giving her *best things*, and her modest wish that they be regarded in the light of a promise, rather than a performance, render minute analysis impertinent. Yet we may be excused for speaking briefly of a few characteristics of the volume, and calling attention to a few favorite passages and poems.

We think the author's reputation will gain by the appearance of her poems in this manner. Considered as a *volume of poetry*, the book has a special claim upon our attention. There may be room for a carping criticism in the inspection of the articles separately. Part of them are somewhat deficient in that felicity of expression and artistic proportion which make the difference between fine metrical essays and poems. But when we read the book as a record of some of the best hours of its author's life—trace the living chain that holds the parts together—linger over passages of rare power and pathos, and lines so exquisitely wrought that any one of them would of itself declare the presence of poetic genius, we arrive at a better comprehension of the ability of the writer. We can almost imagine the work was written at a few successive sittings, so rapidly are we borne along by the sweep of its strong passion and bold harmony. The vitality of the author is wonderful. There is life enough in the book to make half a dozen good volumes—life so full and free that, rather than endure suppression, it will *blaze* into utterance. These poems carry their own apology in that they were written because the author could not help it. The channel by which a pent-up stream reaches the surface is hardly a subject for lectures from a professor of hydrostatics, and the strong and pathetic rhythms of a soul toiling out of night into day, cannot be scanned by a mere student of Campbell and Whately. As a whole, we receive the volume as a great promise, from one who knows of what she speaks when she talks of the future.

Of the quality of the genius here displayed we will speak hereafter. We would gladly quote many passages which have delighted us, but space will not permit, and the poems of this writer suffer essentially from such a process of mutilation. She pours a continuous tide of life through each; and, beautiful as many passages are, they must be approached along this current of thought and feeling to be fully enjoyed. We will therefore only briefly speak of a few poems which especially please us.

Passing "The Dedication," which, though short, and in prose, is yet an exquisite poetical gem, and the "Proem," we come to the most ambitious among the earlier poems, "Ariadne" and "Pygmalion." Of these we prefer the latter—indeed, in completeness and felicity of execution, it is surpassed by few of her later productions. The "Horseback Ride" is full of the poetry of motion, and makes us almost curse that "stitch in the side" which stands between our heart and horseflesh. There are beautiful stanzas in "The Restored," written out of a more subtle inspiration than often comes to its author. "Dreams" is powerfully written, and the touching lines "To a Bereaved Friend," and "The Last Gift," need no words of ours to commend them to all who have suffered. There is fine fun in "Wanted—a Theme," and "The Lost Heart." The latter is an exquisite specimen of the writer's style of poetic treatment. Many of the poems are tributes to friendship. Of these, we like best "The Love Letter," if we may particularize among the beautiful things of this kind. "Darkened Hours," "The Dream," "The First Doubt," "The Midnight Vigil," and "The May Morning," are all striking productions, and deserve better treatment than to be made into a catalogue, as here. Several noble reform lyrics are interspersed through the volume, of which we will only mention "The Army of Reform." "Constance" is a true poem; and we commend a diligent perusal of "A Fragment" to faint-hearted lovers. But the most remarkable pieces of all, to us, are, "The Poet of To-Day," and "Arnold de Winkleried." In grandeur of conception, and boldness of execution, they stand out from these pages as prophetic, in a nobler sense than any others of their author's future. The volume ends with a beautiful tribute to a friend.

But we do not intend now to write a mere notice of these beautiful verses, either to detect faults of execution where their author has perhaps already discovered more than we, or to particularize beauties which, truly as we enjoy them, delight us as much for their promise of things more beautiful as by their own merit. We would rather, from the materials afforded by these two volumes, attempt an estimate of the quality and power of their author's mind.

It cannot be regarded an act of critical injustice to do this; for now, by issuing her prose and verse in separate publications, Grace Greenwood has taken a place as a decided force in American Literature. She can no longer expect to be judged only by the rules that apply to those who write to fill magazine pages from the ordinary motives. It is now her privilege to be treated as an author of books. Neither can she demand that the peculiar circumstances of her enviable social position shall either absolve her from the obligations or shield her from the exposures of a "Literary Woman." It is certainly a great comfort to her friends that she is not "*blue*;" yet if she were, public expectation could be no more exacting than it must now be towards one who, in the odd moments of a life crowded with home duties and travel, and disturbed by the kindness of innumerable friends, has contrived, at an age when most authors begin to print, to write two of the most readable of American books. Therefore we do not apologize for telling all about her which we can find scattered through these pages. Of *herself*, too, for Grace Greenwood cannot be separated from her words, she is the background to every page before us, and these are worthily treated only when regarded as an expression more or less complete of her large and versatile nature.

A glance at these volumes will show that their author has written no single work which may be taken as a complete expression of herself. All the articles, prose and poetical, bear unmistakeable signs of the circumstances of their birth and their place of destination. They were mostly written to answer the calls of a periodical literature, and are the offspring of a thousand moods—attempts at embodying thoughts and feelings often too overmastering to yield to the writer's power of utterance. We find indignant declamation against social evils, whose laws of origin and extirpation were not very clearly seen, while the heart was aching with a sense of their terrible enormity; the effervescence of glad animal spirits, frolicking amid the common joys of life, or stimulated into rebellious mirth by the excitement of travel and an acute enjoyment of the pleasures of sight-seeing; the generous outpouring of a warm heart towards friends in whom she trusts with an affection as strong and sustaining as it is free and childlike; attempts to wrench from the canvass, the marble, or the pages of good books, or Nature, the secret of that beauty which has subdued her, and give it in a few glowing and concentrated sentences to the world; half despairing essays to climb those calm ideal heights of religious contemplation which always tower along her horizon crowned with sunbeams, though separated from her by gulfs and floods; or half-devout, half-passionate dreams of that love which is at once human and divine, solving the problem of this life, and opening long vistas into the life to come—the joy, the sorrow, and the consecration of the soul—all this, and more, we find in these books. Yet no one of these spiritual states has been written out with great accuracy or the highest artistic effect. A certain haste and incompleteness is a general characteristic of the articles. They have been thrown off at a white heat from the forge, and with a few quick strokes of the hammer, rather than fashioned over the slow intense fires and by the delicate handling with which the great poets, who are masters of their own inspiration, have produced immortal works. These pages are a record in short-hand, of a life rich in varied experiences. In them we see the authoress bounding through meadows and woods, over hills and across cultivated fields, too intent upon *things* to care greatly for her own imitations of them, and silencing the clamor of "numerous friends" for "specimens," by tossing to them now a wild flower, a maple bough, or a golden sheaf of corn, or saucily drenching the face of her pursuer in a shower of spray, as she spurs her horse over a brook, or rides into a line of breakers. If in these hurried salutations she has now and then thrown us a weed clutched with a handfull of flowers, and has not been careful to use her scissors upon the thorns lurking amid her clusters of roses, perhaps the fault is as much in those who have worried and teazed her into haste, as in herself.

However this may be, we see nothing here to justify any special imputation of lightness in the assumption of literary responsibilities. Few women become authors deliberately; and the choice of circumstances which draws a young girl from the enclosure of home into the arena of letters, is rarely known to those who confidently pronounce upon her motives and success. We should never accuse Grace Greenwood of intellectual frivolity. Truly, she is not quite so anxious as some young ladies we know, to make pictures of herself in interesting, sentimental postures. We should say, that she oftener tried a gallop among the hills, a dance, or a chat, or in the event of failure there, a strong effort at "choking down," as a cure for those vapors which will come over the best of us, than doleful hexameters on the torture of pairs of imaginary lovers, through ten mortal pages of Godey or Graham. We like her all the better that she does not invite us to be the confidant of those moods which every true man or woman conquers in hours of retirement, or by the side of the heart's best friend. But we can read out of her pages an earnestness of purpose, a longing for excellence, a reverence for truth and love and beauty. Even her humor, in its wildest freaks, is often but the head of foam that rides a dark, rushing current. She is no stranger to that sadness which oppresses every genuine soul, as it looks around, within, and above itself, and which envelops the noblest characters like a pensive atmosphere of interwoven light and shadow. Her fun as often leaves tears upon her cheeks as her pathos. It may be all the better that she has written so long in her peculiar dashing moods; that she has been content to extend herself on every side, to make essays of her power in a hundred directions, and grow up to a large and generous womanhood, before she presumed to embody in more ambitious works those thoughts and sentiments which can hardly be seen in all their wide relations by girls or boys on the sunny side of twenty-five. Beneath her apparent levity may be discovered a more intelligent earnestness, and a juster appreciation of the difficulties in the way of successful authorship, than under the large profession and meager performance of many shallower and more conventional natures.

So much, in justice to the circumstances and peculiar intellectual conformation of this writer, must be admitted. And it is with all this in our mind that we now proceed briefly to estimate her power, and remind her of the claims to which it legitimately exposes her.

It is a matter of congratulation, both to Grace Greenwood and her readers, that the finest and strongest element of her genius is that which she possesses in common with every true woman. The strongholds of her power are her quick, intense, and far-reaching sympathies. Endowed with a great, warm heart, she is capable of a depth of feeling known to few. And yet the *range* of her affections is proportionally great. While others cling to a few objects of thought and feeling, fearing to trust themselves away from their influence, she, with an energy and versatility as refreshing as remarkable, embraces a thousand within the atmosphere of her glowing sympathies. She loves at once sincerely and widely. In turning the pages of these volumes, we are constantly alighting upon a new "enthusiasm." A person, a picture, a train of thought, a new phase of emotion, or plan of benevolent action, for the time appears to absorb her. Yet she is hopelessly fixed in none of these moods. No person can make her unjust to others—no great work of art narrow her taste—no habit of intellect make her a pedant—or no scheme of reform drive her into a violent partisanship. She will love, and talk, and work for all; give to them a great will and devotion—everything except *herself.* So generous and impressible is her nature, that, from the intensity with which she acts, a hundred people might suppose her fitted peculiarly to shine in the sphere through which she approaches them. But while each is briskly advancing in hope of securing an advocate for his "*ism*," possibly thinking he is walking into a "slush" of concessions, he suddenly "brings up" against a rock. We have not yet discovered in her the casual tokens of exhaustion and satiety from thus extending her circle of thought and life, yet in this direction lies her greatest danger—for every nature has its bounds, and a too generous and susceptible genius often responds to every call, until the love for variety becomes the thirst for mental excitement, and, in a series of convulsions to push out boundaries, the central power is weakened and the intellectual life collapses.

This sympathetic energy appears on every page of the books now before us, and modifies every development of their author's mind. It is the finest quality in her humor. In her lighter moods she is always the great-hearted woman, and her shafts of wit, though swiftly sped, are never poisoned. She can laugh merrily over the ridiculous features of things she loves, and still hold to them with a genuine reverence and faith. It is this superabundance of good nature that makes her mirth so contagious, and even disarms criticism before her *puns*; for we would rather accept the worst of them than lose the laugh and twinkle of the eye with which it comes to us.

The same quality is apparent in her criticism. Without being a critic, she often writes better things of books, persons, and art, than those who sit in the reviewer's chair. Her susceptibility to impressions from all sides quickly brings her into contact with beauty and truth, and she writes of what has moved her out of a full heart. Of course, the mingling of herself with what has pleased her destroys the value of such essays as *criticism*; for criticism is the accurate representation of another's nature, not the outpouring of affection for it. Yet we would spare these pages of her books reluctantly, for they abound in those happy intuitions which offer to the critic his choicest materials.

But it is in her poems and a few of her tales that we feel this power most decidedly. She writes of friendship and love as few others can. All the generous sentiments are here represented with a force and beauty at times almost overmastering. Her joy could force a laugh upon the most care-worn cheek, and her pathos drench the sunniest face with tears. Yet she never reaches the summit of her power until inspired by a great religious sentiment. Freedom, among the Christian [illegible] mind; and rarely are we so moved as by her eloquent denunciations of public sin, and her fearless advocacy of the great reforms of the day. This deep religiousness is the highest manifestation of her genius, and assures us of her future advancement. No woman can live content with what she has done, whom God has so often led up to those high places where faith abides, and the anomalies of Providence are resolved into an all-embracing harmony.

This central power in our author's nature is greatly aided in its expression by a vivid representative imagination. Of the possession of imagination in some of its forms, she has yet given little evidence. She fails in the delineation of character; Harry Grove and Kate Richmond are all of her offspring who have not dodged us. Neither is she preëminently an artist. She has not the Tennysonian power of holding a subject in an intense mood of contemplation till every thought or image which belongs to it has moved to its own place. Her best productions fail in completeness, and are but fine fragments. Great in thought, and glowing with passion, they are but hints of the vision she saw, and stimulate rather than satisfy the reader. But she is richly endowed with that form of imagination which in some indescribable way imparts vitality to the mind. She is alive in every part, and cannot write otherwise than entertainingly upon the most trivial subject. And her power of description is great. Nature and life arrange themselves into pictures which spring to her page with all the characteristics of reality. Yet her eye is oftener turned upon life than nature, and her descriptive power has hitherto been most favorably shown in vivid representations of manners, mental states, and moral impressions. No one can write better of manners and social life. A late series of letters from Washington, published in the Philadelphia *Saturday Evening Post*, bears ample testimony to this. Some of her Congressional portraits in these are models of their kind. The best of her poems are those in which her religious sympathies unite with her descriptive powers, as in "Arnold de Winkleried," where a grand picture is wrought out under the inspiration of an elevated moral sentiment. She has yet to do greater things in this direction. We know of no American writer, excepting Whittier, whom she may not hope to excel in ballad writing.

But the action of both these faculties of which we have now spoken is greatly modified in this writer by other peculiarities of spiritual conformation. Endowed, beyond her sex, with a quick eye for incongruities, and a manly strength of will and heroism of thought, her Affections and Imagination work under the incessant and almost skeptical gaze of her Intellect. Much of her peculiar power and her weakness arises from this combination. By it her sympathies are kept from passing over into sentimentalism, and her Imagination is restrained within due bounds. A strong and healthy Intellectual atmosphere envelops her prose and verse. Thus her best words always give life and power, and in her loftiest flights we feel assured that her eye has measured the distance before her wings were spread. In a complete state of mental discipline, her intellect and fancy would be permeated with passion, and her feeling always respond to vigorous thought.

But so it is not always in the pages before us. Her faculties are sometimes out of harmony with each other. Her Intellect often stands sneering at her heart, and her Imagination writhes in self-imposed chains. Thus a painful impression is produced. We are conscious of the presence of great energies in a state of conflict. She has not yet emerged from the sphere of passion. The action of all her faculties is slightly feverish and spasmodic. And while in this condition we can hardly look for that harmony of action which is the result of clearly defined aims and rigorous mental discipline, and long repose of soul. Her faults in this direction are such as she could not easily have avoided; and they are to be overcome by no half-despairing, half-inspired, occasional efforts. The niche in Fame's temple that awaits her is not to be reached by one magnificent leap, but by a winding stair. When we consider how many obstacles must be conquered, how many disturbing influences forgotten, how much of the experience of life brought within reach of the intellect, how many efforts made for expression, how many vanishing intuitions clutched and held fast on the verge of the mental horizon, before one true poem can be written, we can only be surprised at such uniform excellence as we find in this series of articles written to answer the emergencies of magazine literature, and can prophecy any degree of success to one who has wrought so persistently and with such uniformly elevated purposes as our author.

We had intended to speak of the style of these volumes—especially that of the prose articles, which is in many respects original and admirable. But the length of our remarks must be an excuse for so meager reference to it.

We are aware of the imperfection of this attempt at analyzing the mind of a writer whose rapidly increasing popularity is the best proof of her genius. We do not pretend to have indicated with perfect accuracy the secret sources of her power. These lie beyond analysis. Criticism can never explain the effect which books like hers produce upon us. And, after all, the whole business of criticism is somewhat farcical. We tie an author into his chair and paint his portrait, and, while congratulating ourselves upon our admirable success, a change of expression in the face shows our picture to be only a caricature. Neither do we presume to decide in what direction this writer will best succeed. Genius knows its own resources better than those who have been only spectators of its occasional efforts. There are people enough to tell Grace Greenwood what she must or must not do; we will only thank her for what she has done, and speak a word of encouragement to greater attempts. That she will be true to *her own* best convictions in her future literary labors, we shall not doubt. That she can ever fold her hands and sit down to receive the homage of those who are already satisfied with her, we will not do her the great injustice to believe. Those who come to burn incense before her will find an altar on which the fire has gone out; while she is far beyond, in the wilderness, with bare feet walking along those paths which are paved with flints before they are strown with roses. We know no woman to whom faithful and constant labor in the way indicated by her nobler instincts will secure a richer harvest. And while we read these volumes, so rich in early promise, we look with a great hope to the results of their author's continued labor, assured that she who in her girlhood once so delighted us, will not rest till, in the power of a mature womanhood, her name has become inseparably connected with American Literature.

* Greenwood Leaves. Poems. By Grace Greenwood. Boston: Ticknor, Reed, & Fields: 1850-'51.

For the National Era.

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HICKORY HALL: OR THE OUTCAST.

A ROMANCE OF THE BLUE RIDGE.

IN FOUR PARTS.

BY MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH.

"I can bear scorpion's stings, tread fields of fire,
In frozen gulfs of cold eternal lie,
Be tossed aloft through tracks of endless void,
But cannot live in shame."—*Joanna Baillie.*

PART IV.—Continued.

It was thus that the wayward and erring, but generous fellow ever deified even the greatest faults of his betrothed. I felt, when he spoke, that, with all his eccentricities, he was so much better than Regina as to be utterly blind to one thing which was quite apparent to me, namely: that as some diseases infect the whole physicial system, so pride pervaded the whole mental and moral being of Regina Fairfield. Pride was the life of her love for Wallraven. Had not Wolfgang Wallraven been the eldest son and heir of an ancient and immensely wealthy Virginia family, living in her own old ancestral neighborhood—had he not been singularly handsome in person, graceful and dignified in manners, brilliant and profound in conversation, and endowed with genius that gave promise of an illustrious career—he never could have made so deep an impression upon Regina Fairfield's imagination and heart.

While seeing this, I saw in every glance, tone, and gesture, of Wolfgang, that *he* must have worshipped *her* under *any* circumstances. How passionately fond of her he was! How entirely devoted to her service! How patient—he, the willful, haughty, sarcastic Wolfgang—how *patient* of her arrogance, her cold exactions! It always seemed to me that my beloved Regina walked in the moral illusion in which she had been brought up, as if the world had been created for her use and the people for her service. She accepted the most arduous and unremitting attention, and even the munificent marriage settlement, with such real and sovereign *nonchalance*, as such a mere matter of course, deserving neither acknowledgment, gratitude, nor remembrance. And this regal indifference, which would have grieved *me* deeply, had I been in Wallraven's place, never affected *him* in the least.

Their marriage day was at length fixed for the next Thursday fortnight. Bishop L——— was to perform the ceremony, immediately after which we were to set out for Hickory Hall.

Wallraven *had* intended to go immediately to Paris, but Regina had betrayed a wish, or rather gayly expressed her *will*, that they should, according to the wish of the old gentleman and the time-honored custom of Virginia, spend the honeymoon in retirement, at the patrimonial home of the bridegroom, Hickory Hall.

Wallraven hesitated, looked disturbed, made—I know not what sort of excuse for opposing this plan. Regina good-humoredly persisted in her purpose. Wallraven expostulated seriously. Regina was charmingly immovable. For the first time in their lives, Wallraven decidedly vetoed her will, and gave it as his final determination, for reasons of the utmost moment, to proceed to Paris. Wolfgang gave this decision in a firm, grave, though affectionate tone; but Regina became extremely offended. *Finally*—

Wallraven bowed his will to hers—*fatally* bowed his will to hers—and retired to his chamber with a gloomy brow, to write and accept his father's invitation, and prepare them to receive us.

Wolfgang remained in his room all the forenoon; and so, when I wished to speak to him—thinking that he had surely long finished his letter—I went to his door, and, according to our usual familiar and unceremonious habit with each other, without rapping, entered his room. He was so closely engaged in writing—so absorbed, in fact—that he did not perceive my entrance until I had approached the side of his chair, and had involuntarily seen that he had reached the fifth page of a foolscap letter. I spoke to him. He started, thrust the letter into his writing-desk, and turned around. He looked paler, more gloomy, than I had seen him look for six months, or more.

He told me that, in consequence of the change of plan, by which we were to go to Hickory Hall, instead of abroad, he had written, among other things, for his sister Constantia to come on and be present at his marriage, inquiring of me, with much interest, how I supposed Miss Fairfield would like Constantia. I told him what I thought, namely—that Regina could not fail to admire and love Miss Wallraven. He seemed pleased, and then I reminded him of an engagement he had made to ride with me that afternoon. He smiled mournfully—said that it had escaped his memory, but that he would soon be ready, &c.

From this time it was evident Wallraven's cheerfulness was gone. He had apparently purchased peace with his bride at a very dear and dangerous rate. His gloom deepened day by day, or was varied only by fitful flashes of false gayety, or spasms of sharp anxiety. These evil symptoms, however, were never betrayed except in the absence of Regina. In her presence he would always resolutely command himself, and act a gay tranquillity which was far from his real state of feeling. I do not know whether Regina penetrated his mask or not. If so, she never permitted me to see that she did.

She was certainly very much pleased with the prospect of going to Hickory Hall, and of having Constantia Wallraven for a bridesmaid and a travelling companion. Smiling, she said to me one day—

"Do you know, Ferdinand, what makes me so wicked about this matter of going to Hickory Hall? It is to see that fine old Virginia gentleman, whom I shall love as a father, and whose love I wish to win. I cannot bear the idea of going to France without ever setting eyes upon him whom I love to regard as a second father. I do not care if the old Hall *is* tumbling down! There is a certain *prestige* of old respectability about that dilapidated building, which does not always surround a smart-looking new tenement, however large and costly."

Then turning to Wallraven, she said——

"Such an absurd mistake of your highness, my Black Prince! that of supposing that I should be shocked at the worn appearance of the old house!"

The day previous to her wedding-day she came into my room, smiling stilly and sinking softly in a chair at my side, she said—

"Oh! Ferdinand, I am so well pleased. Wolfgang has a letter from his father, and now it is *certain* that Miss Wallraven will be with us this evening, and attended by—whom do you suppose? her twin brother Constant, Wolfgang's younger brother! You never told me of him!"

"I knew nothing about him! What a queer silent fellow your *parti* is, Regina! I wonder how many other brothers and sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins, are to turn up!"

"Oh, none! This Constant, who is a year younger than Wolfgang, has been for twelve months travelling in Europe, and has recently returned."

"Ah! and they come this evening!"

"Yes! Ah, Ferdinand! I shall have a *sister*. I do not care for Constant much. I do not care for the *brother* I shall gain, for I have already *one* dear brother; but I care very much for the father and the *sister* I shall have. I have been lonely, Ferdinand. I have borne within my bosom a cold heart, because I have had no mother or sister to keep it warm. For some reason or other, I never formed a female friendship in my life. I never could bring myself to make advances to other young ladies, and something within me repelled others from making advances to me. I have, with all my independence, needed that sisterly relation. Generally, I have been cold and strong enough; yet sometimes I have felt myself suddenly droop, with an utter weakness, for the want of some gentle woman friend whom I could love, whom I could trust. Now, in the failure of a sister of my own, my husband's sister will become inexpressibly dear to me; at least, I feel as if it would be so. I think it will be her own fault if it be not so."

I wondered to hear Regina speak so. It was the first glimpse, with one exception, that I had ever had of the heart within her cold bosom. Yes, I wondered, until I remembered that under the snow of earliest spring the grain still germinates unseen in the warm and genial soil.

That evening, according to appointment, Mr. and Miss Wallraven arrived. In the bustle of their arrival, I had little opportunity of making observations. After supper, however, when we were all—the three Wallravens, Regina, and myself—assembled in our parlor, I had every facility for studying my prospective relatives. First, I saw that Regina was more than satisfied with the new brother and sister.

Constant Wallraven was nearly the fac simile of Wolfgang—the same tall, slight, elegant figure, the same haughty set of the head, the same light gray blazing eyes, the same wilderness of slightly curling, silky black hair, jet black eyebrows, and long black lashes. But he looked stronger, older, and more settled than Wolfgang. He looked as if at some time, not far distant in the past, he had been just such a chaotic assemblage of discordant elements as Wolfgang *now* was; and as if some mighty power had forcibly subdued the chaos, bringing out of it a world of harmony, beauty, and strength. Withal there was an expression of frankness, good humor, and health of mind and body, on his handsome face, which testified that the transforming *power*, whatever it had been, had *not crushed*, but *disciplined him.* Only by the perfect repose, perfect harmony of these antipathetic elements of character betrayed in his features and complexion, could one judge of the previous ministry of a disciplining experience; [illegible] in him now a man who, though still *quite* young, had gained the great victory of his life; whose manner of existence and work was henceforth defined, laid out, and well understood.

I felt instinctively a high respect for, and a strong attraction to Constant Wallraven, as to a soul more exalted than my own.

Constantia was the same dark, majestic, superbly beautiful woman I had seen her by night at Hickory Hall. I do not know that my artist taste was ever so highly gratified as by comparing these two young girls, Constantia and Regina, both so perfectly beautiful, yet so opposite in their forms, features, and complexion; yes, and *style*—though both were of the queenly order. Constantia's was a natural dignity, Regina's a conventional stateliness. Upon the whole, we were all well pleased with each other, and it was on the stroke of twelve before we parted for the night.

Once or twice I had observed an unwonted thoughtfulness upon the usually clear, open countenance of my sister; but that was so natural under the circumstances, that it made no impression upon my mind. When I had retired to my room, however, and before I had time to begin to take off my dress, I heard a tap at my room door, and, thinking that it was of course Wolfgang, I bade him come in. The door opened, and my sister entered, and sunk softly down in her usual seat near my dressing-table. I looked at her inquiringly, anxiously. The stately gayety which had distinguished her all the afternoon and evening had quite gone, and the thoughtfulness that had once or twice, cloud-like, flitted past the sunshiny snow of her countenance, was now settled into a profound gloom.

"My dear Regina, you look so grave! but then this is a serious time to you!"

To my astonishment, she burst into tears, and dropped her head upon my dressing-table.

"Regina! my dear sister! what is this? Tell me." But she sobbed on.

"Regina, you alarm and distress me! What *is* this?"

But she sobbed on, and I sat down by her side, took her hand and pressed it, while I waited silently for her to tell me the subject of her grief. When her fit of weeping had expended itself, she lifted up her head, dried her eyes, and, after remaining silent and still for a little while, she said—

"You think me now sentimental, maudlin, sickening. I feel that you do. I am not that. I never was so. You ought to know it."

"I do know it, my dearest sister; and sentimentality is the last fault I should suspect you of. I know that you are strong, cool, and spirited—therefore I have been the more surprised and distressed by your tears this night. I know that it is natural—nay, generally inevitable—that a girl should drop some—not very bitter—tears on bidding good bye to her maiden life and liberty; but I had scarcely expected to see you do so, inasmuch as you have less to regret, and more to hope for, than most young ladies similarly situated—nevertheless, I suppose these 'natural tears' must fall!" said I, gently caressing her.

She replied, mockingly—

"Ah! it is quite proper for a bride to weep, then? Like the ring and the white kid gloves, it is an indispensable ingredient in the wedding dish? It is understood and expected of us, in short—and people would be shocked and disappointed if it were omitted."

"Regina—sister," said I, tenderly.

"*Certainly!* Half the trashy songs I learned to sing at school were—not after my own taste, the martial—but such mawkish ditties as the 'Bride's Adieu,' &c."

"Humph! Wolfgang's queerities are certainly catching; that I know of my own experience," said I; and I dropped suddenly into a short reverie upon the contagion of resemblance between persons of no consanguinity who love each other and are constantly associated.

Feeling too deeply interested in my sister's emotions to indulge, even for five minutes, in this tempting subject, I turned, stole my arm around her waist, and said, gently—

"Regina, my dearest sister, to-morrow I will scarcely have a right to do this;" and I gathered her to my bosom, and pressed my lips to hers. "To-morrow, certainly, I shall have no right to question your happiness, or the state of your affections; do not, therefore, be proud or cold towards me, like your worse self; and do not be sarcastic, bitter, or satirical towards me, for *that* is not like yourself at all. *That* you have caught from Wolfgang; but, tell me, what has so deeply, strongly moved you this evening? It is not an imaginary grief, nor a real one, if *slight*, that could trouble you so much—what is it, then?"

She did not reply; but remained in my lap with her arms thrown up over my shoulders, and her face over my bosom.

I spoke again.

"You have apparently less to alloy your happiness than almost any other bride. You have less to regret and more to hope for. You leave no dear, familiar home, no honored father, no beloved mother, no dear sister—wherefore should you grieve?"

"I leave you, my dearest brother! I leave you, the sole remnant of our family circle! I leave you, who stood to me for father, mother, sister, *home!*"

"Yet leaving *me*, dearest Regina, should not cost you a sigh! nay, it *will* not! Dearly as we have ever loved each other, we have not been together much; therefore you will still remember and love me, without throwing away a sigh upon my absence."

"Yes! so you have judged my heart! You have studied me so well!" she replied, almost bitterly. "The one thing I looked forward to in life was a reunion with my only brother, Ferdinand—and you know it was the main topic of all my letters; yet now you judge me able to part with you for a long, indefinite time—perhaps forever—without pain!"

"At least, so I would have it, dearest sister. I am not so selfish as to wish you to regret my absence!"

"But I *should* regret it! I *shall* regret it, if I cannot persuade you to go with us, as I hope to do! as I must do!"

"As you will *not* do! But it is not I for whom or by whom you sorrow *now!* Tell me, then, what it is, dearest sister, while it is yet not too late! To-morrow—yes! in *seven hours* from this—for it is now one o'clock—I shall have no right to ask you!"

"I will tell you, then. My heart is dreadfully oppressed! Oh, how I *do* wish that I had a mother, an aunt, a married sister, a matronly friend—any wise gentlewoman, upon whose bosom I could lay my head as I lay it now on yours, and ask her in a whisper if upon the eve of her bridal day she were visited with such terrible forebodings as I am now—such anxieties—such funereal presentiments!"

"How long has this been so with you, Regina?"

Oh! for days, or, rather, for *nights* past—in the daytime I have been amused, and forgetful; but at night, as soon as I get to sleep, I start from my first sleep in a sudden and terrible panic! just as a condemned criminal might suddenly be wakened out of a deep, sweet sleep, with the sudden recollection that he was shortly to be hanged. To-morrow is my wedding-day; yet it terrifies me as though it was the day of my execution! I do not believe Madame Roland and the heroines of the Reign of Terror dreaded the guillotine and the executioner half as much as I dread my marriage and my husband!"

Gloomily as my sister spoke, or, perhaps, because she did speak so gloomily of what appeared to me to be only considerable exaggeration of a very natural feeling, for the life of me I could not help laughing, in which, to my surprise, I was joined by Regina, who raised her head from its resting-place, and, arising from my lap, sat down beside me.

"I would be an old maid, then, if I were you. There is no law against it, and this is a free country!" said I, jocosely.

"I know it is foolish—this presentiment"——

"Presentiment!"

"Yes, *presentiment*—this dark, uncertain, slippery, cold feeling of the precipice edge!" she replied, gravely—her flush of mirth quite gone.

"But this will pass away in a few days, Regina. You love Wolfgang."

"Yes, and *dread* him more! Oh! listen, Ferdinand! Listen, my dear brother! I will open my heart to you this first and last time! this once! for to-morrow, as you say, you will have no right to inquire into the secrets of my bosom I will have no right to communicate them to-morrow; this would be an infringement of my marriage vow; to-morrow, my oath of allegiance would make these confidences treachery. Listen then! I *do* love Wolfgang *quite* as much as I am capable of loving any one—*almost* as much as he loves *me*. I have loved him almost from the first evening of our meeting; but, since our engagement, lately—*now listen!* for, contradictory as what I am now about to tell you may appear, it is nevertheless *true*—though inexplicable to *me*, as [illegible] said, while I am strongly attracted to Wolfgang, I am as strongly *repulsed!* It is as if some principle in my being were powerfully *drawn* towards him, while another principle was as powerfully *repelled*; or, as if some element in Wolfgang's nature possesses for me irresistible fascination, while some other element affects me with disgust—which fills me with remorse—which I endeavor to conquer—which I only succeed in concealing!"

"You have succeeded in *that!* I never suspected it!"

"Thus, you see, my bosom is made the battle-field of warring emotions, and over all broods this dark presentiment, like the lowering black clouds of some approaching and destructive storm!"

"Do not marry him!" said I, earnestly.

"I *must!* The hand of fate is on me! I have no power to stop myself!"

"Then *I* can stop you! I can be stronger than fate! You shall not be married!"

"But I WILL! I LOVE him! If I had the power I would tear out from my bosom that which occasionally recoils from him, though it were the one ventricle of my heart! . . . . . . It is half past one o'clock; my marriage-day has come, dearest brother; dearest, *only* brother! I only came in to kiss you."

"To give me an opportunity, for the last time, of pressing my maiden sister to my bosom," said I, as I held her there.

"Yes! and with no intention of afflicting you with my equinoctial storms"——

"Your—*what?*"

"My equinoctial storms—the clouds, the thunder, lightning, and showers, that have marked my approach to the line matrimonial!" And dashing clouds and tears from her now sparkling face, she kissed me and vanished from the room.

In the silence of the night, after she had left the chamber, I heard the pattering of raindrops against the windows. I went to them and looked out, and found the sky black and lowering with clouds, and the streets drenched with rain. I turned away, and at last, throwing off my clothes, lay down to try to sleep. *My* spirits were heavily oppressed. There is nothing more disheartening than to feel some evil fate impending over those we love, and to know ourselves powerless to avert it. However, wearied out, and lulled by the sedative pattering of the raindrops, I fell into a dreamless sleep, and slept till morning.

It was a dark, drizzling, dull morning. At seven o'clock we met in the parlor, to go together to church. We had ordered breakfast at eight. The stage in which we had engaged places was to start at nine. Wallraven looked happy and—frightened, and seemed to strive for self-command.

Regina's countenance, like a spring sky, seemed all the brighter for her equinoctial storm. She wore a beautiful dress of full white blond over white satin, with fine lace trimmings, and pearl bracelets and necklace on her arms and neck, and a pearl bandeau turning back her blond hair, and fastening a large, floating, mist-like veil. Miss Wallraven was attired in a somewhat similar style. Again I was struck by the contrast presented by these two young women—the blond and the brunette—both so dazzling, beautiful, yet so unlike. One, clear, bright, morning sunshine—the other, resplendent starlight.

We stepped into the carriage, and were driven to the church. We found Bishop L——— punctual, waiting for us. We ranged ourselves before the altar, Constant and Constantia acting as groomsman and bridesmaid, and I giving away the bride.

After the ceremony was over, we returned, accompanied by Bishop L———, to breakfast, and in an hour afterwards, bidding adieu to our venerable friend, we took our seats in the stage and set out upon our journey to Virginia. The rain ceased and the sun shone out at noon.

It had been arranged among us, as the season was very beautiful, and certain parts of the country through which our roads lay very picturesque, that we should travel leisurely, taking a week for the journey.

At Washington we found the large family carriage of the Wallravens, that had been sent to meet us there, and that had been waiting for us for several days. We remained in the city two days, to visit the Capitol, Navy Yard, Government Departments, &c., and the third day entered the capacious and comfortable travelling carriage, and set off for the Blue Ridge and Hickory Hall. This journey, from Washington to the Blue Ridge, was one of the most delightful journeys I ever took. Our carriage was not only convenient, it was luxurious. We were attended by our own servants, took our own route, and kept our own hours. We managed to be six days on a route that we might have travelled in two. Sometimes, at sunrise, after an early breakfast, we would leave the inn at which we had passed the night, and travel leisurely but twenty miles through some wildly picturesque country, reach another quaint country inn by noon, eat dinner, and, after an hour's repose, order saddle-horses, spend the afternoon in excursions about the neighborhood, return to tea, and occupy the evening in conversation, or books and music, with which we were provided. We would sleep then, and the next morning resume our journey, which would be continued with some pleasant new variation. Miss Wallraven and myself were thrown very much together, and I found her mind and heart as rich and well cultivated as her person was beautiful and her manners charming. I admired her with enthusiasm; yet, not for one moment was I in the slightest danger of falling in love with her, even if there had not been something in her manner that politely kept me at a certain distance. As for Regina and Wolfgang, they behaved very much like any other bride and groom upon their wedding journey—they seemed fond, and shy, and tremulously happy.

In approaching the mountains, and the old neighborhood of the Northern Neck, first settled by her ancestors, Regina became deeply interested in features of the landscape and the local history of the country. Upon reaching any high point on the road, she would order the carriage to be stopped, and while she surveyed the extensive and varied landscape, with its far-apart country-seats and farm-houses, surrounded with their little town-like groups of out-houses and negro quarters, and while she picked out with her quick and scrutinizing glances the oldest homesteads of the old settlements, she would ask of Constant Wallraven a score of questions about their first proprietors. The public and private history of many families she knew by fire-side traditions, so as to recognise them as soon as they were named, and look with another and a deeper interest at the places of their habitation.

On approaching, however, that grand pass of the Blue Ridge, known as the Bear's Walk, the historical and traditional interest of the country gave place in her mind to a rapt enthusiasm, as she gazed, silenced and transfixed with admiration and awe, upon the sublime and even savage aspect of nature.

It was the fifth day of our journey that we began to ascend the great pass of the Bear's Walk, from the highest point of which Regina gained her first view of Hickory Hall, and saw it under the most favorable circumstances, and in the most favorable light, namely:

We had ridden slowly that day, only fifteen miles, and through the most sublime and beautiful scenery in the world; and now, quite fresh, we found ourselves, in the middle of a lovely summer afternoon, upon the summit of the mountain-pass, and gazing down with delighted surprise upon a scene of almost ideal beauty, not to be equalled on earth.

I wondered at the enchanting transformation made by a different and more genial season, and another and a brighter hour. The scene which on a dark, tempestuous winter night had seemed a Gehenna, a Hades, to me, now, in the light of a summer day, appeared a Happy Valley, a Garden of Eden—Elysium itself.

A cup-shaped, small, and deep green vale, shut in by a circle of high mountains. Deep in the bottom of this green vale, gem-like, was set the old hall, where, in the beams of the evening sun, it glittered and flashed with the ruby lustre of long-exposed red sandstone; around it spread green pastures, embossed with white flocks of sheep; beyond these waved yellow fields of grain, ripe for the sickle; around them passed a girdle of forest trees—behind which arose the circle of intense blue mountains, with their summits against the transparent golden horizon. Through all ran the clear mountain stream, which, springing from a rock at our feet, and leaping down the side of a precipice, glided, flashing in the sun, through the midst of the beautiful vale. Over all smiled the most radiant sky—shone the most splendid sun I had ever seen.

"How beautiful! how beautiful! It is a terrestrial Paradise!" exclaimed Regina, with enthusiasm. "But," inquired she of Constant Wallraven, while scrutinizing the old hall, "why does not your father repair, or rather rebuild, the old house?"

"My father thinks of selling the property."

"Of selling that Eden!"

"Yes! and we all think it the best plan, under existing circumstances."

The difficult descent of the precipice interrupted further conversation. The road, however, was in its best condition, and in twenty minutes we had reached the bottom, and soon after drew up before the door of Hickory Hall.

Mr. Wallraven, with the same suit of black contrasting so strongly with his snow-white hair, with the same venerable appearance, the same social and stately bearing, advanced from the hall to receive us.

[TO BE CONCLUDED IN OUR NEXT.]

For the National Era.

INVOCATION.

BY CORNELIA E———.

Hark! the solemn hour of midnight, chiming on the silent air;
Hushed be every wild emotion, banished every weary care;
Here beside my quiet fireside, where the looming shadows glide,
I invoke thy faithful presence, O fond Memory! at my side.

Come with gentle mien and bearing, star-eyed one with voice so low,
Thrilling me with distant echoes from the hills of "long ago;"
Long ago! O land of beauty—where, with joy and childish glee,
All the long sweet days of summer fairy footsteps wandered free.

Up and down 'mong thornless roses, 'neath the skies where glowing hung
Earth's resplendent bow of promise, on whose arch a syren swung,
And in tones of silver sweetness sang the syren Hope alway,
Beckoning with the hand mysterious to the land of "far away."

Paler in the sober azure glows the rainbow of to-day—
Where was Hope, now Faith sits, pointing to the land of "endless day."
With thy touch so strange and wondrous, sweep these chords with skillful power,
Wakening memories that have slumbered till this resurrection hour.

Human heart for love that yearneth, hold sweet revel here to-night;
O refresh thy weary longing—bask awhile in love's pure light.
Songs for long, of such rare sweetness, have not lingered on thy chords—
Looks so blended with affection, language formed of such dear words.

In this fountain, freely gushing, quench the burning thirst of years,
Sympathy and love spontaneous, dew my eyes with blissful tears.
So, sweet Memory, I thank thee for thy precious boon to-night,
Renovating all my being—casting on the future light.

Monticello Seminary, November, 1850.

OREGON.

To the People of the United States:

Fellow Citizens: The object of this brief circular is to make you acquainted, in the fewest words possible, with the most extraordinary inducements held out to emigrants to Oregon, and with the several modes of reaching that country.

The cloud of obstructions, so long lowering down over that Territory was completely dispersed by Congress at its late session, and the uncertainties heretofore existing as to the removal of the Indians, and the titles to lands, have been removed by the enactment of laws for that purpose.

A law was passed at the late session, providing for the extinguishment of the Indian title to all that part of Oregon lying west of the summit of the Cascade Mountains, and for the removal of the Indians inhabiting it to some point east of those mountains. A Board of Commissioners have been appointed under that law, to treat with the Indians west of those mountains, for their lands, and with the Indians east of the same mountains, for other lands to which to remove the Indians first named. A superintendent of Indian affairs has been appointed, whose duty it is, under the protection of the military force stationed in the country, to occupy his whole time in attending to the duties of this department; and under him are placed three Indian agents, and three sub-agents, for the more efficient management of the affairs in this department. Heavy appropriations have been made, to be followed by still larger ones, to enable the officers appointed to prosecute successfully the objects of the law. All people, therefore, everywhere, may rest fully assured, that there is not the slightest danger of trouble with the Indians hereafter. I would also state that there is no danger from Indians in going to Oregon, overland, nor after you have reached the country.

On the heel of this law, another one was passed, at the last session of Congress, giving to all men, over eighteen years of age, arriving and settling in Oregon previous to December, 1850, 320 acres of land, if single, and if married, 640 acres. The bill then provides that if those single men marry in one year from the first of December, 1850, they shall receive 640 acres. In all cases the wife is to receive one half of the above grant in her own right. Four years' residence and cultivation, to be completed either before the date of the law, or after, is required before the *final* title is made from the Government, though the title is good to all intents and purposes, as against everybody but the Government, from the moment the claim is taken. If the man or woman, or both, die after taking the claim, and before the four years expire, the same goes to the survivor and heirs, so that it cannot be lost by this casualty.

The bill next provides, that all white males over twenty-one, emigrating to the country and settling there, between the first day of December, 1850, and the first day of December, 1853, shall receive 160 acres of land, if a single man, and if married, then 320 acres. But there is also a provision here, that if single men marry in one year after arriving in the Territory, they then receive 320 acres. All male minors who go to the country and settle, and become twenty-one before December, 1853, will receive 160 acres of land, absolutely; and if they marry in one year after arriving at majority, they will receive 320. All foreigners, by filing their intentions of becoming American citizens, are treated like native born American citizens, and they are only required to complete that naturalization before they get a final title. Of course this would have to be done in the shortest time, or they would lose their land. The same residence and cultivation are required as before, and, as before, the woman receives, as